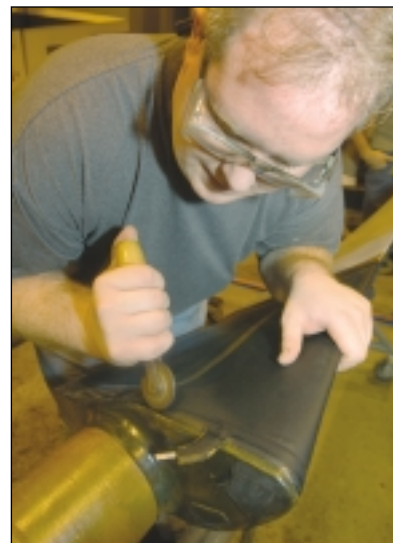


Balancing act

C-130 propeller shop mechanics provide for a smooth ride in the sky



Barry Yurgalavage installs a heater to a blade, which will prevent the prop from icing.



U.S. Air Force photos by Sue Sapp

Justin Bridges measures the width and thickness of a prop blade while Rodney Cooper records the data.



Bobby Grier overhauls a valve housing for a propeller.

When the C-130 fires up its engines, the propellers provide the thrust needed to move the aircraft. The mechanics in the Maintenance Directorate's C-130 propeller shop are experts in providing the means for that thrust. The shop turns out about 55 completely overhauled C-130, four-blade propellers a month.

"We do a complete teardown, overhaul each part and rebuild the propellers" said Ken Price, work leader in the prop buildup shop. "Full operational tests except rotation are done in the shop to make sure it's operat-

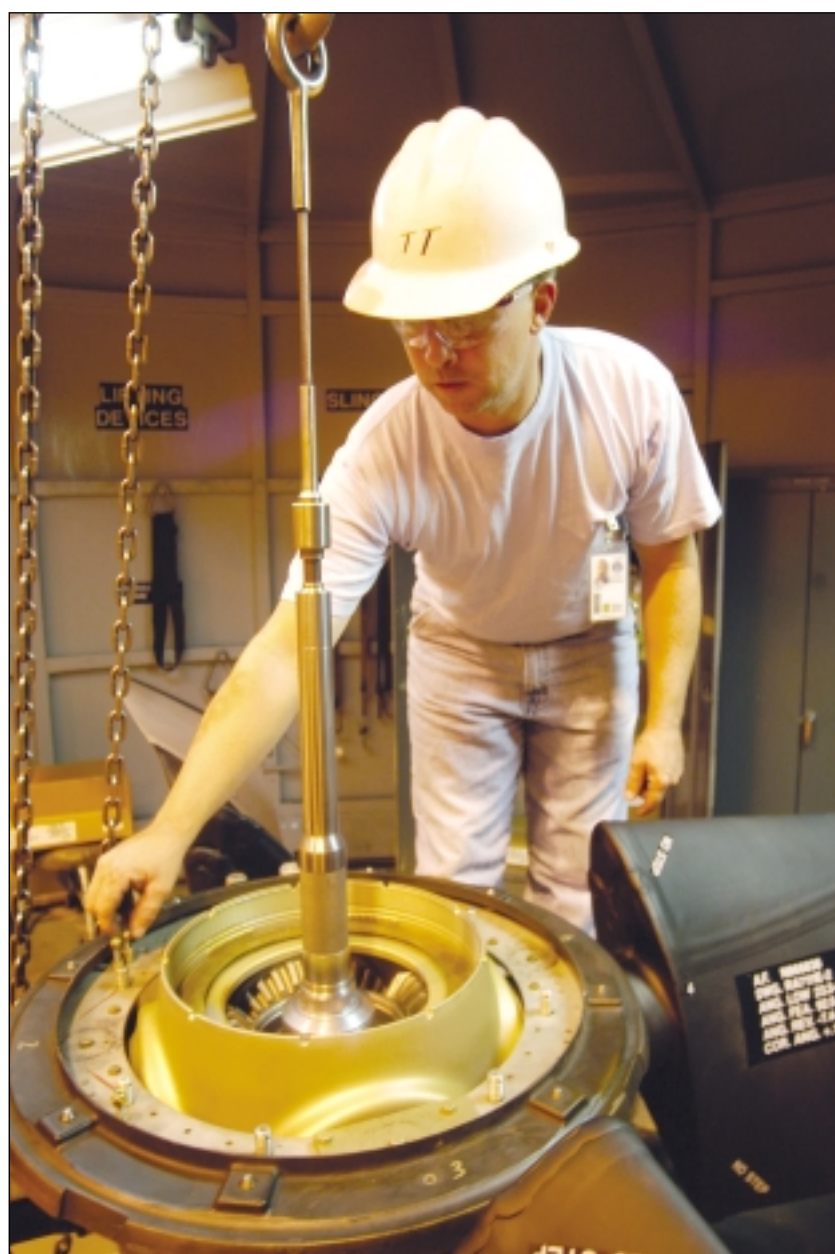
ing within required parameters before it goes on the aircraft."

Part of the job consists of a huge balancing act. Each blade is individually balanced, then grouped with compatibly balanced blades to form the complete propeller. The propeller is then balanced again as a unit.

The balance provides for smooth rotation without wobble.

"The people in this shop have a job to do, and they do it well. It's a good feeling to see a C-130 fly overhead and know we had a part in it," Price said.

— Sue Sapp



Todd Trodahl, above and left, does a final balance to a propeller. After blades are individually balanced, they have to be balanced as a unit.

